

rob it of the success that it merits ; and we can warmly recommend it to the thoughtful student of social science as well as to the intelligent general reader.

R. AUSTIN FREEMAN.

Leybourne, Grace G., and White, Kenneth. *Education and the Birth Rate : A Social Dilemma.* With a foreword by Professor A. M. Carr-Saunders and an introduction by Professor R. H. Tawney. London, 1940. Jonathan Cape Ltd. Pp. vii+375. Price 10s. 6d.

It is to be hoped that the war will not prevent this book from being widely read and discussed, for the problem with which it deals will have become more acute by the time we sit down to face the tasks of reconstruction. It is the result of two years' intensive research sponsored by the Population Investigation Committee and it brings together for the first time a wealth of social statistics relating to the structure of the educational system of this country in its bearing upon family size.

In the first chapter the authors trace, in a masterly fashion, the historical development of the varied types of schools woven into the complex pattern of our educational system. They show how the impetus created by the Industrial Revolution influenced the growth and characteristics of, on the one hand, the public and private schools, and, on the other, the State schools.

The development of this system during the last hundred years is but the logical sequence of the community's desire for knowledge, not as a good in itself, but as a means to the acquisition of wealth and as a weapon in the highly competitive urge for social distinction. No one has better summed up these social values than Charles Dickens when he wrote : "As is well known to the wise in their generation, traffic in Shares is the one thing to have to do with in this World. Have no antecedents, no established character, no cultivation, no ideas, no manners, have Shares."

Society, in its struggle to obtain what is for many the unobtainable, has practised

to an ever increasing extent family limitation, on the guiding principle that "He travels the fastest who travels alone." The forces contributing to the decline in the birth rate are many and may be said to include social, economic, biological, religious and psychological factors, all of which merge, in varying degrees of strength, into one broad and universal communal pattern. To a eugenist the problem of either the broad stream or the isolated current of education is both qualitative and quantitative. The authors of this book are mainly concerned with the problem of numbers. This does not suggest that they have ignored the question of quality, but owing to the deplorable paucity of social statistics in this country in the past it is doubtful whether the problem could have been further explored. In Chapters 2 to 5 they deal comprehensively with the costs of education and provide precise details of the expense involved in training for the various professions. In their conclusion it is remarked, "There seems to be, then, no group in the social hierarchy for which the cost of education has not been a factor of importance in causing the collapse of the birth rate." This, I believe, may be true of the professions, of clerical and skilled workers, and, to a lesser degree, of the unskilled, but I am doubtful whether educational costs have, to any significant extent, influenced the attitude of the aristocracy and landowning class. Yet it is this class which has reduced its birth rate to a level considerably below that of any other social group. Dr. Leybourne and Mr. White do not attempt to find points of comparison with the experience of other parts of the world where the twin problems of a falling birth rate and differential fertility are known to exist : nevertheless we may remember that in one country, Sweden, the factor of educational costs was not accorded any significance in the Reports of the Population Commission. The relative absence of class rigidity in the structure of Swedish Society and consequently in their educational system may well account for the Commission's opinion. Yet in this country with similar fertility problems we have the fact of class immobility co-existing with a

widespread illusion of mobility. The two, operating together to colour our whole social milieu, cannot be regarded as other than unhealthy.

In their final chapter the authors put forward suggested policies for checking the detrimental effects of educational expenses on fertility. Analysis of these policies, however, brings them to a negative conclusion so far as educational reform is concerned. They write: "It is here that the heart of the matter lies." Until it is possible to bring about a reorientation of values so that social climbing loses its fascination; and until our social structure is so modified that education does not have to be regarded as determining our children's future—as the main key to pleasant or unpleasant, secure or insecure, employment—little hope can be held out for ultimate success in eradicating altogether the adverse effects which paying for education may have upon our national birth rate." This was, in other words, the opinion of Arsène Dumont when, in the 1890's, he expounded his theme of "social capillarity."

This book should be in the hands of not only eugenists, but educationalists and parents, for one has only to read it to realize the enormous hidden reserves of intellectual capacity that exist among the children of the 60 per cent. of income earners who receive on the average less than 60s. a week. It is these children who comprise the bulk of our future population and it is from them and their parents that any significant addition to our total population must come. The pity of it is that so many cannot achieve the higher rungs of the educational ladder. J. L. Gray's survey showed that 70 per cent. of pupils in the central schools, from which advancement is very unusual, possess an ability equal to that displayed by only half of the fee-payers in the secondary schools, and Lady Simon reported that in Manchester one in five of the children who win places in secondary schools in that city do not take them up. Whatever problems of collapse or reconstruction face our old-established public schools, we must not forget that approximately 90 per cent. of all children between the ages of 5 and

11 are in the elementary schools in this country. It is here that the national problems of quantity and quality lie; if we attend to these children the Universities will come to no harm.

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RASSENHYGIENE

Gumpert, Martin. *Heil Hunger!* London, 1940. George Allen & Unwin. Pp. 128. Price 5s.

IN the January "Notes of the Quarter" (p. 208) some reference was made to an advance summary of Dr. Martin Gumpert's material on public health in Nazi Germany. The recent publication of the book in this country has now provided an opportunity for a closer study of the author's work and conclusions.

Let it be said at the outset that the material, the whole of which has been taken from official German sources and from medical and technical publications, has been handled in a somewhat tendentious manner. The style is inclined to be clumsy and there are occasional attempts at sensationalism. We suspect that the author was rather carried away by the alarming facts he has unearthed from presumably censored journals. Perhaps the place—New York—and the time—March 1940—were not appropriate to objective editing. And perhaps the present writer, not wishing to dispense the facile optimism of the first nine months of the war, has paid too much attention to Bertrand Russell's dictum that "ascertainable truth is piece-meal, partial, uncertain and difficult." However that may be, the material itself is worthy of the closest attention.

It is evident that mortality and morbidity rates, particularly for infectious diseases, have taken an unfavourable turn since about the year 1934. The number of reported cases of dysentery has risen steadily from 2,685 in 1933 to 7,545 in 1937. Any question of epidemic can therefore be ruled out. Moreover, this trend is confirmed by an increase of over 100 per cent. in the cases of